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GN Docket No. 25-133 Proposed Rulemaking:

Integrate VHF frequencies into FRS/GMRS

Concept: Family Radio Service (FRS) and General Mobile Radio Service (GMRS) benefit from interoperability between licensed and license-free radio users. Integration of the Multi-Use Radio Service (MURS) into a VHF-equivalent GMRS service would benefit existing users and dovetail with the current increase in demand for convenient emergency family communication.

Problem: The current UHF GMRS is useful only for limited local simplex communication if there are no repeaters available, especially in mountainous terrain. In severe weather events, repeaters are often disabled. This results in most people being excluded from effective radio communications during emergencies. This drives demand for unlicensed users to acquire VHF amateur radio equipment with a plan to operate clandestinely.

Solution: VHF has much more potential for regional simplex communication if repeaters are disabled or unavailable. VHF also carries much better in mountainous terrain. This will suffice for most of the emergency communications market.

Proposed Structure: Integrate MURS1, MURS2 and MURS3 into the low-power center channels of the proposed service, and MURS4 and MURS5 into the mid-power segment of channels. Integrate several disused VHF frequencies in the 151 – 155 MHz range into the high-power and repeater channels.

Equipment: Using this range of frequencies will enable users to simply use one dual-band antenna for both ends of the service. Several currently produced radios and antennas can integrate this addition, and market forces provide a likely incentive to produce a comprehensive dual-band GMRS radio. This will also solve much of the misplaced emergency-communications market away from the amateur radio equipment market.